

THURS 6th APR 78 v CARSHALTON ATH (14) HOME WON 3-2

SECOND HALF WINNERS

WYCOMBE WANDERERS 3, CARSHALTON ATHLETIC 2

A THOROUGHLY spirited second-half display by Wycombe Wanderers gave the Blues a satisfying 3-2 victory over Carshalton after being 1-2 down at half-time.

Seldom have the midfield played as well this season, setting up attack after attack, so that although the Wanderers were twice behind, a home win was always on the cards.

The Robins charged into attack from the opening whistle, and a weak back-pass from the normally rock-solid Paul Birdseye for Peter Spittle's first touch of the ball nearly let Alan Walker in to steal a goal on 2 minutes.

Then an even slower piece of defensive work by Priestley on the other flank allowed John Roseman to slide a gentle shot past Spittle, just inside an upright.

A goal down in three minutes shook Wycombe into action and their first foray into the Carshalton half two minutes later produced the first equaliser. A perfect 'nod on' to the feet of Graham McKenzie by Tony Horseman allowed Jock to unleash one of his specials from 10 yards into the roof of the net, giving Ian Finch no chance.

By the time the first quarter of an hour was over, the pattern for the remainder of the game was set. Carshalton, playing with only Roseman and Chris Gedney up front, had to rely on breakaways. Most departments saw the Blues on top, and but for a superb performance by Graham Dennis in midfield who was always in the thick of the action, Wycombe could have gone ahead at any time.

But out of the blue, and totally against the run of play, Carshalton took the lead again after 21 minutes.

A masterful run by Tony Maurice from a deep defensive position, beating three Wycombe men on the way, resulted in a through ball to Robin Kember, who found himself unmarked on the edge of the Blues' penalty box. The Carshalton man controlled it well and slammed a shot just under the bar.

A middle of the park battle followed, with Wycombe still controlling most of the play. Howard Kennedy was only just wide with a vicious left foot shot from 20 yards and Tony Horseman had one blocked.

Wycombe's pressure was continuous and severe in the second half as the Blues began to 'buzz'.

After only a minute, Phil Dade was forced to head over his own goal after a fine cross by Harris. Roseman fouled Kennedy, and Horseman's free kick was just scrambled away. Kennedy himself went inches wide, Roger Day put Holfield away on the left, the cross flashing across an empty goalmouth, and Alan Phillips only just missed a header from close in after another Horseman free-kick.

The second equaliser came on 58 minutes. An enormous overhead kick from Keith Mead way out on the right, dropped just short of the goal-line, and Harris was there to provide the finishing touch.

The Blues' relentless pressure brought about the winner, Tony Horseman scoring a fine solo goal, dipping a shot from 15 yards into the corner of the net.

Mercer back at Wembley for Vase

JOE Mercer will be back at Wembley this season. The former England wing-half and ex-Manchester City and Aston Villa manager, now a Coventry director, has been invited to make the presentation of the FA Vase to the winners on April 22, in what appears to be a complete break from FA protocol.

It is far better, in my opinion, that people like Mercer, who has put so much into the game, be invited to play a further part rather than some elderly retired Lieutenant Colonel.

Next year, too, is sure to see further changes in the clubs taking part in this competition. It looks as if the Channel Islands will have two representatives, one from Jersey and the other from Guernsey.

Cost has been the main drawback as the teams competing do not attract large gates, but a system of subsidies for visiting teams is likely to be worked out to help defray costs. These would include air fares and hotel accommodation.

The Middlesex County F.A. is looking for sponsors for their Senior Cup. Secretary Alec Smith would be pleased to hear from anybody with suggestions on this matter.

NON LEAGUE NEWS

The Kingsmead Athenian League could be losing two clubs at the end of this season. A decision by the shareholders of Erith and Belvedere at an extraordinary meeting voted for them to join the Kent League and Kingsbury Town have run into problems as they plan to improve their facilities.

Erith's decision has brought immediate repercussions with secretary Eric White and four of the club's directors resigning. They understandably see this as a backward step for a club that only 14 years ago pocketed £68,000 from the sale of some of its spare ground.

Kingsbury, following complaints by local residents, have been forced to make changes in the improvement plans submitted to the local council. These included a clubhouse extension and a new stand. But following complaints about excessive noise they have been ordered to scrub their car park and build another at the bottom of the ground.

They will not get permission to go ahead with further expansion until this is done. The heavy cash outlay for relocating the car park would ob-

viously bite deeply into any money earmarked for ground improvements.

Ilford will have a second season playing at Leytonstone's ground. This is due to a bill of £183,000 claimed by the Inland Revenue on the sale of their old ground at Lynn Road. The interest on this is £45 a day and Ilford have paid this to avoid the interest. They have a firm of Chartered Surveyors negotiating with the District Valuer.

Secretary Derek York is convinced the trouble has been caused by the valuer's over-estimation of the value of the ground and his failure to take into account the worth of the buildings on it — two stands, clubhouse, terracing, etc.

"It's the first time a soccer ground has been sold in this country since the Land Development Act was passed," said York, "and it has brought problems. We have paid the £183,000 plus £16,000 interest without prejudice and appealed against it."

Moves: T. Shrieves, Sutton to Woking; J. Hawes, Leytonstone to Cheshunt; R. Syrett, Barking to Clapton; P. Dawkins, Aveley to Rainham; P. Hanison, Dulwich Hamlet to Kingstonian; J. Adams, Hayes to Woking; A. Odeje, Aveley to Bromley; J. Chapman, Hornchurch to Aveley; R. Gaston, Grays to Bromley, and S. Moss, Harlow to Epping.

JOHN BOWLES